

ES OF THE CHILDREN WHO ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE PUBLIC S

(Sketched from Life Yesterday.)



ROOM FOR SCHOLARS!

ve Thousand Children Un-
o Find a Place in Which
Study Their Lessons.

f the Board of Education to Shift
Responsibility Proves Suc-
cessful in Part.

s and Men Who Have Studied Problems of the
por Discuss the Situation and Sug-
gest Remedies.

near the end of the
more than 55,000 chil-
in the public schools.
45,000 who are taught
or 30,000 who attend
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dren who roam East
to learn, quick to im-
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shift responsibility
but of Estimate and
y's financial commit-
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as no money to build
the legislature build
school bonds and the
Apportionment has
s than 105, which is
a life. But this is
of the present situa-
lack of knowledge,
ed by those whose
d the failure of the
plan wisely in the
ing of the present.

CLUDED THOUSANDS.

the Public Schools and Out Based
e Police Census and Superin-
ndent Jasper's Estimate.

inted to go to public schools last year,
mission and spent the months in idle-
.....49,806
for increase in population, to get the
led this year.....4,980
.....54,786
will be available on the completion of
under contract, to be contracted for be-
1897, and finished by September 1, 1897, 32,828
cluded and for whom no school sittings
d before the beginning of the next
increase in population allowed for).....21,953
owed to attend school only half of each
the lack of sittings.....20,000
the public schools (including half-day pu-
.....160,000
be admitted as soon as repairs on seven old
mpleted, and who are not included in the
excluded.....12,000
te schools.....45,000
chial schools.....20,000
n whose education is provided for.....247,000

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Essex Market School not been delayed by
the inaction of the Sinking Fund Com-
mission more than 4,000 children who are
now on the streets might have been en-
rolled as pupils. C181
Children may attend school at five years
old. The Compulsory School law says they
must attend from their eighth to their
fourteenth year. It was charged a year
ago that 50,000 children were excluded
from the schools because of lack of room.
Members of the Board of Education denied
this and a police census resulted in show-
ing that the fact had been understated.

Non-Attendant Children.
In considering the following table it
should be borne in mind that in the year
since this census the change in the condi-
tion has only been along the line of in-
creased population, and that if there were
78,423 children out of school in 1895 who
should have been in school, the number is
at least 10 per cent greater to-day:
**NON-ATTENDANT CHILDREN, UNEM-
PLOYED.**
Male, Females, Total.
Between 5 and 8 years.. 19,578 20,225 39,793
Between 8 and 12 years.. 1,970 2,135 4,105
Between 12 and 14 years.. 794 1,047 1,841
Between 14 and 16 years.. 1,702 2,073 4,435
24,105 26,080 50,185
NON-ATTENDANT CHILDREN, EMPLOYED.
Male, Females, Total.
Between 5 and 8 years.. 378 640 1,018
Between 8 and 12 years.. 1,059 1,211 2,270

HURRY UP THE NEW BUILDINGS.

By Jacob Riis.

There is no short cut of the fix we are in. It is the inheritance of a bad past, and we have got to suffer it until we learn to improve upon its methods. When a man has broken a leg by his own heedlessness he has got to wait till it heals, and, meanwhile, hobble around as he can on the other. The school destitution on the East Side is no new or sudden ailment. It has existed right along, and has defeated the purpose of the compulsory education law from the beginning. The remedy is to build more schools. Several sites have been chosen, and for one new school, at least, that is to take the place of two long since condemned, the plans have been ready over a year and the site chosen, yet no step has been taken toward beginning its erection. The old buildings stand on the site yet. So long as this policy endures young thieves will grow up on the East Side in ever-increasing numbers, as is now the case.

There are churches, perhaps, and halls on the East Side that might be turned to use as emergency class rooms. But they are not plentiful. Some of the churches have day schools already; in others the hygiene conditions are bad. I have heard that one or two refused to listen to such a proposition last year, but I can hardly credit the report. Nearly all of the halls have saloons attached. The law requiring all school buildings over a certain height to be fire-proof obstructs the use of tenements and flats and of most of the old private houses that yet remain. Still, of the latter kind a few might be found to serve.

The only resort is a bad one—namely, to make more half-day classes. The remedy is to hurry up the new buildings for which money has been appropriated. It cannot be that the inability of the city to sell its bonds can last. That crisis must shortly pass. And meanwhile no time should be lost in pushing the work. There is not, and never was, and good reason why it should take the city three years to acquire a school site and build the house. For private purposes the same property could be obtained at less cost in a month. The best proof of it is that the law now requires the work of acquiring the title to be done in six months.

PUBLIC MUST TAKE THE BLAME.

By R. Watson Gilder, Editor of the "Century Magazine."

I do not see where there could be a more deplorable lapse in the conduct of our civic affairs than in the failure to afford proper educational facilities for the children. The Tenement House Commission found that "the foreign-born population of this city is not, to any great extent, forcing children of legal school age into money-earning occupations. On the contrary, this population shows a strong desire to have its children acquire the common rudiments of education."

In the reports made by Professor Giddings to the Commission this memorable statement was made: "If the city does not provide liberally and wisely for the satisfaction of this desire the blame for the civil and moral dangers that will threaten our community because of ignorance, vice and poverty, must rest on the whole public, not on our foreign-born residents." The large majority of the children who are now without school accommodations have one or both parents born abroad; as, in fact, nearly 43 per cent of all our inhabitants were themselves born abroad, and over 76 per cent had foreign mothers.

I do not see how I can put the case any more strongly than it was put by Professor Giddings, who is a high authority on sociological subjects. I believe no time should be lost in exerting every power of the Government to prevent the mischief which threatens so seriously.

With regard to details, there are able, energetic and public-spirited men on the School Board and city government outside of the Board, who are fully capable of devising and executing measures of immediate relief, and I hope they will make themselves felt without delay.

In the Seventh it was shown that there were 2,341 children in the public schools whose ages were from 5 to 8 years, 2,038 in no school at all and 502 in parochial and private schools. In the Tenth there were 2,652 children of this class in all kinds of schools, and 2,313 not in any school. In the Twelfth there were 4,497 little children in public schools, and 4,404 out, although 1,400 other children were provided for in the parochial and private schools.

There were 10,008 truant in the city last year, according to that table, 10,008 whom the law said must be enrolled and attend school. There were 20,708 children out of the schools at the only time in their lives when they may live without work—from five to eight years old. The number is greater to-day, and not one per cent of the truant are voluntary violators of the law.

Any one who saw the masses of children and parents who fought in front of East Side schools for admission, if only for registration, knows that. The policemen who drove them from the streets, a disorderly mob, can testify to their eagerness to be taught.

In those mobs were the little ones from five to eight whom the law says may go to school, and were mothers to be taught, and were mothers to be taught, and were mothers to be taught.

Dropping the children who were out of school last year and were employed, there remained still a total of 50,185 who were idle and excluded from the schools by the lack of accommodations. Few children attend school after their fourteenth year. Drop those of more than that age enumerated in the table of unemployed, and there remained excluded 49,806 in September, 1895, for whom the Board of Education expects to provide 32,828 sittings by September, 1897.

Nor is this the end of the story. All through the East Side half-day classes are the rule in the lower primary grades, where the crowding is greatest. Children who attend in the morning remain at home in the afternoon to let other children occupy their seats. A year ago it was said that in 1896 there would be no half-day classes; there are more now than ever before. To abolish them the Board must add at least 20,000 sittings to its present total. Then not a pupil not now enrolled can be accepted.

Jasper on the Situation.

City Superintendent John Jasper was asked if he could suggest a plan for providing the excluded children with instruction. He said:

"We have considered all plans that have been proposed, and have found none that answers the emergency."

"Let me tell you of a peculiar condition which has existed in Chrystie street for years. There is one school south of Grand street, and one north of Grand street. The people living on both sides of Grand are Polish Jews, but those above that dividing line are merchants, and those south of it are peddlars. Now, when one of the schools has been overcrowded and the other had vacant seats, we have tried to transfer pupils. The distance is only a few blocks, but not half a dozen children have ever been transferred. The merchants would not permit their children to associate with the peddlars' children, and the peddlars would as soon think of sending their children to the Vanderbilts' home as to the school patronized by the merchants, who are of their own nation and faith."

"Again, on the west side of the Bowery there are nearly always vacant sittings in the schools, and I suppose that nearly 600 children from the crowded East Side might be accommodated in the west of the Bowery schools. We have tried, time and again, to transfer them, but have failed utterly. I don't believe six were induced to cross that dividing line."

"We have encountered caste and race prejudices in many quarters, and hitherto have had no authority to compel transfers. A little might be done to relieve the congestion in some quarters, and I propose to ask the Board of Education to either authorize the Board of Superintendents or its own committee to compel children to attend the school nearest their own home."

Commissioner Parker was equally positive. "Some steps must be taken to provide accommodations for this great army of children. It is absolutely necessary to hurry."

ALBERT SHAW ON THE PROBLEM

Editor of the Review of Reviews Offers Many
gestions of Value.

By Albert Shaw, Editor of the "Review of Reviews."

I have been heartily in sympathy with the agitation which the Journal began to make so vigorously upon the question of the shamefully inadequate supply of school facilities for the children of New York. There are many others far more competent than I am to suggest the best steps to be taken what may be termed the emergency relief that the immediate situation demands. But I have a word or two that I desire very much to say on the broad general situation. C187

The State and city of New York long ago committed themselves to the policy of providing ample means for the elementary education of all who desired to patronize the public schools. For a long time free public instruction was provided as a privilege to be voluntarily availed of by the families of rich or poor. But gradually there developed a strong sentiment in favor of universal education, and this sentiment became crystallized at length in the form of statutes making school attendance compulsory for all children.

The State and city of New York took the position that it was their business to provide schools, to determine how and what the children should be taught, and to see that none escaped instruction. There is much to be said in favor of compulsory education, and there is also much to be said on the other side. All things considered, I should be inclined to support the principle that it is the duty of the State or the municipality to see that no child is deprived of his right to grow up an intelligent, well-instructed citizen.

But when the community has gone so far as to organize the administrative machinery of compulsory education, with a corps of transient officers on duty to see that parents do not evade the law let it be remembered that the community has assumed a very serious responsibility. It has become morally responsible, not only for the provision of an ample number of properly constructed school houses, and the employment of an ample number of well-qualified teachers, but it has also put itself under the plainest kind of obligation to adapt its teaching in these public schools to the real needs of the people, who are compelled to patronize them. It is a terrible shame and fraud to set up the machinery of compulsory education in the city of New York with no proper

equipment of school houses, with no adequate and comprehensive scheme for making school facilities meet the needs of the boys and girls of this great city.

If the community had not committed itself to the instruction of the children of New York, it would have been made in some other agencies—principally the different religious denominations. One half of the elementary school facilities of Britain and Ireland, the public schools, or so-called other half. In New York a considerable proportion of the Roman Catholic Church—these members their share of taxes for the support of the free within the rights of these Catholic people, at state schools and to insist upon schoolhouse space adequate instruction, in the buildings provided in New York. Nothing in our educational system voluntary and denominational schools while a them and to make their maintenance difficult.

But what would happen if it should suddenly Catholic authorities that they would use their school purposes, and send their children to the long congestion, enormous as it is, would simply many thousands more of children. Under the organization, the Children's Aid Society, and charitable organizations, there have now in New York a number of private free schools many thousands of children. It has lately much plausibility that there is no reason why educational work, and that it would be to allow the public school system to take care of instructions the societies are now providing voluntary schools should be closed?

The simple fact is that the community matter of elementary education, which into practice. It has gone so far with supported by taxation, as effectively putting or collateral systems of education England, for example. But on the other to meet the imperative demands of the full immigrant with the boast and the promise his children shall have a better chance for life than the children of the poor could possibly time begins, the chances are that these very the overcrowded school rooms of the East Side to the less desirable type of immigrant, who children rather than to send them to school, if compulsory and his children must without factory and report at the school house door, only a mockery when it appears that the three

Any young person of school age in New school, whether in the day hours or in the cause of lack of room, is defrauded of his right to send his children to the schools of New able and convenient place for them in those cases as to justify almost any kind of charity.

It is not true that the European immigrants for his children in this city. The parents for an instant with the schools that a children of the poor in Paris or Berlin, or a ment of Europe. In Paris, not only are the of the poor may have a warm meal at school desirable; and connected with each school men and women who take a close personal the school, in order to see that none are whole shoes or other plain necessities.

All that public opinion needs in New preclusion of the wretched shortening its elementary education. Whatever other city, there is nothing that can compare mental importance, with the necessity of fore, the Journal will continue its discussion for months, or years, as may be needed.

This is the question of the masses, classes in New York, unlike in most other children to the public schools, but not the schools. This accounts in great measure the community which can most easily come to it. In Chicago, Cincinnati, St. American cities of importance, the parents by the children of the rich as that public opinion is much more on public school questions excellent—are in fact